1	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA		
2	WEST	PALM BEACH DIVISION  NO. 23-cr-80101-AMC	
3	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		
4			
5	Plaintiff	June 24, 2024	
6	VS.	10:03 a.m 11:42 a.m.	
7	DONALD J. TRUMP, WALTINE DE OLIVEIRA,	NAUTA, CARLOS	
8	, Defendant	. Pages 1 to 90	
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10	TRANSCRIPT OF MOTIONS BEFORE THE HONORABLE AILEEN M. CANNON UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE		
11			
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16	STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY:	
17		LAURA E. MELTON, RMR, CRR, FPR Official Court Reporter to the Honorable Aileen M. Cannon
18		United States District Court
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- 1 (Call to the order of the Court.)
- THE COURT: Good morning. You may all be seated.
- 3 Please call the case.
- 4 COURTROOM DEPUTY: United States of
- 5 America v. Donald J. Trump, Waltine Nauta, and
- 6 Carlos De Oliveira. Case Number 23-cr-80101.
- 7 Will parties please state your appearance, starting
- 8 with Special Counsel.
- 9 MR. BRATT: Good morning, Your Honor. Jay Bratt and
- 10 James Pearce on behalf of the United States.
- 11 THE COURT: Good morning.
- MR. BOVE: Good morning, Your Honor. Emil Bove,
- 13 Todd Blanche, Kendra Wharton, and Lazaro Fields, here for
- 14 President Trump, who is not here this morning with leave of the
- 15 Court.
- 16 THE COURT: Good morning to all of you.
- 17 MR. WOODWARD: Good morning, Your Honor.
- 18 Stanley Woodward and Sasha Dadan, on behalf of Mr. Nauta, who
- 19 also is not present, with leave of the Court. And then, my law
- 20 clerk, Ashleigh Bondoc, is here with us as well.
- 21 THE COURT: Good morning.
- MR. IRVING: Good morning, Your Honor. John Irving and
- 23 Donnie Murrell on behalf of Mr. De Oliveira, who is also not
- 24 here.
- 25 THE COURT: All right. Good morning to everybody.

- I hope everybody had a good weekend. We are set this
- 2 morning to hear argument on the second half of the motion
- 3 discussed on Friday. This is styled as President Trump's
- 4 motion to dismiss the indictment, based on unlawful funding of
- 5 Special Counsel Jack Smith. There is an opposition and reply,
- 6 along with some supplemental briefs with respect to a recent
- 7 Supreme Court decision on the Appropriations Clause. I have
- 8 reviewed all of those materials and I'm prepared to hear
- 9 argument.
- I do want to note we have, as usual, our live feed
- 11 setup to the second-floor overflow room, for any additional
- 12 folks wishing to view this proceeding.
- And so with that, Mr. Bove, are you going to be arguing
- 14 this morning?
- MR. BOVE: Yes, Your Honor.
- 16 THE COURT: All right. Let me hear from you then, from
- 17 the lectern.
- 18 MR. BOVE: Thank you, Judge.
- In this case, the Special Counsel's Office from its
- 20 inception, should not have been accessing the -- the permanent
- 21 and definite appropriation, and they should not be able to
- 22 access it going forward. In this criminal case, in this
- 23 setting, the Appropriations Clause operates as an important
- 24 restraint on the executive branch and their ability to make
- 25 cases like this.

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             Big picture, and I think some of this draws on some of
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     the things that we talked about on Friday, there are two main
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     flaws in the government's opposition to this motion. One is
     that they're persisting in strained interpretations -- and I
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     think interpretations is generous -- of statutory text; and
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     second, there is irreconcilable tension between the position
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     with respect to the Appointments Clause and the independence of
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     Jack Smith. Textually with this appropriation, there is really
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     two terms I would like to cover this morning; one is the term
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     "other law," and the other is the term "independent counsel."
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             "Other law," I think, we spent a lot of time on on
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     Friday, Judge, because we're in -- are almost exclusively
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     talking about the same series of statutes that was at issue in
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     the Appointments Clause motion, 515, 533, and the interplay
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    between those statutes and, for example, 543 and 519.
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             THE COURT: So would you argue that -- would you agree
     that the arguments travel together in terms of the other law
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18
     inquiry?
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             MR. BOVE: Yes, Judge. And I think what is important
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     here with respect to this piece of the -- the appropriation
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     that we're talking about, the text of the statute that we're
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     looking at, is that it requires a present, current analysis of
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     whether or not there is a valid appointment pursuant to, quote,
     "other law." And so I will just incorporate the arguments that
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     we made in our briefing, and on Friday, with respect to the
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- 1 relevant provisions of Title 28.
- 2 THE COURT: Before you jump into the merits, there is a
- 3 suggestion in the opposition and, I think, reasserted in the
- 4 supplemental brief by the Special Counsel, that you lack
- 5 standing to pursue this challenge. Can you address that issue?
- 6 MR. BOVE: Yes, Judge. I think that the one core that
- 7 is addressed -- the closest version of this argument to the one
- 8 that we're making, Stone -- looked at the standing question and
- 9 looked at it relative to whether injunctive relief was
- 10 available, and said that the appropriate means for vindicating
- 11 the types of concerns that we have on behalf of a criminal
- 12 defendant is a Rule 12(b) motion.
- So I think the Stone case supports our -- the fact that
- 14 we have standing and the ability to bring a motion to dismiss
- 15 here on this basis. And that the McIntosh case from the Ninth
- 16 Circuit certainly supports that. And I think, in both cases,
- 17 they track through some other decisions, where -- I -- I --
- 18 look, I think there was a strategic decision in Stone to pursue
- 19 both injunctive relief -- to pursue both injunctive relief and
- 20 dismissal. We looked at the analysis and the -- the Younger
- 21 abstention analysis in Stone and decided that dismissal is the
- 22 appropriate avenue, but I think it's clear from Stone and
- 23 McIntosh that we can proceed this way.
- 24 THE COURT: So what is the -- what is the cognizable
- 25 injury that you're suffering that is fairly traceable to the

- 1 appropriation?
- 2 MR. BOVE: It is the imminent threat of the liberty
- 3 restraint on President Trump that would result from a
- 4 conviction in this case. And I think that McIntosh looks at it
- 5 exactly that way because there are defendants in that case who
- 6 had not been convicted yet, who were pursuing the appeal as
- 7 a mandamus petition. And the analysis of the Ninth Circuit in
- 8 McIntosh was basically -- there is a liberty interest at issue
- 9 here, and it's -- the threat of losing it is imminent in the
- 10 context of an ongoing criminal prosecution.
- 11 And so I -- my two best cases there are McIntosh and
- 12 Stone, and I think they squarely support what we're doing here.
- 13 And the cases -- especially the D.C. Circuit cases that the
- 14 Stone court walked through, although not criminal cases, the
- 15 abstention doctrine analysis there supports this manner of
- 16 proceeding as well.
- 17 THE COURT: Another preliminary question is: There is
- 18 also a suggestion that you're not actually raising a challenge
- 19 under the Appropriations Clause, because you're not challenging
- 20 the underlying constitutionality of the Appropriations Act in
- 21 1987 and, perhaps, for other reasons. Can you address whether
- 22 you are, in fact, bringing a challenge under the Appropriations
- 23 Clause and why you are, if that is the case?
- MR. BOVE: Yes, Judge. We are -- this motion is
- 25 pursuant to the Appropriations Clause. Some of our arguments

- 1 which we'll get into rely on the text of the appropriation
- 2 itself. But ultimately, the Appropriations Clause functions in
- 3 two ways. There is a Congressional obligation to make
- 4 appropriations where necessary, but there is also a restriction
- 5 on the executive to only act in a way where there is a valid
- 6 appropriation. And I think that, as a general proposition,
- 7 this concept that the Appropriations Clause operates
- 8 as a -- on -- as a -- as relevant to both branches is made
- 9 pretty clear in one of the cases that the Special Counsel's
- 10 Office cites in their brief, OPM v. Richmond. This is the
- 11 Supreme Court at 496 U.S. 414.
- "Any exercise of a power granted by the Constitution to
- one of the other branches of government is limited by a valid
- 14 reservation of Congressional control over funds in the
- 15 Treasury."
- And so our argument here, under that type -- that type
- of analysis and the separation of powers concerns that it
- implicates, is that there is not a valid appropriation that
- 19 authorizes what's going on here. So that is very much a
- 20 constitutional argument based on the Appropriations Clause with
- 21 the separation of powers implications that I have referenced
- 22 grounded in the text of the appropriation itself which does not
- 23 apply here.
- 24 THE COURT: Okay. So just so I understand it, your
- 25 argument is that the payment of money has to be authorized by

- 1 statute, and it's not authorized in this case, and, therefore,
- 2 it implicates the Appropriations Clause?
- 3 MR. BOVE: Correct, yes.
- 4 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Okay. Now, in terms of
- 5 the actual Appropriations Act, what we're dealing with -- and I
- 6 just want to hone in on the specific statutory language. Where
- 7 does it start and where does it end? There is a "provided
- 8 further" with a quotation to 28 U.S.C. 591 note, and then there
- 9 is some other references to what appear to be irrelevant
- 10 material such as Interpol. So I just want to make sure we're
- 11 talking about the same statutory appropriation.
- MR. BOVE: Yes, Judge. So I -- our motion is focused
- on Public Law 100-202. The main text of the motion -- the main
- 14 text that the motion is based on is the language that
- 15 begins -- begins: "Provided further, 28 U.S.C. 591 note" --
- 16 and ends with "other law."
- 17 There is some context in that paragraph that I think is
- 18 relevant to the Court's consideration of what Congress meant
- 19 when it chose those terms.
- 20 THE COURT: Does it include the next sentence:
- 21 "Provided further, that the comptroller general shall perform
- 22 semi-annual financial reviews of expenditures from the
- 23 independent counsel, permanent indefinite appropriation, and
- 24 report their findings to the committees on appropriations of
- 25 the House and Senate"?

- 1 MR. BOVE: That language is in the 1987 Public Law, but
- 2 when it was struck by Congress in 2009, pursuant to Public Law
- 3 111-68 -- and I was hoping to touch on that at some point this
- 4 morning. And I will just do it, I think, relatively quickly
- 5 here because there is, I think, some suggestion that Congress
- 6 having -- some suggestion that that Public Law in 2009
- 7 indicates that Congress revisited the appropriation and was
- 8 comfortable with the state of affairs, and so there is no need
- 9 for Your Honor -- I don't think that is right at all.
- 10 If Your Honor looks at Public Law 111-68, and this is
- in Section 1501, what's really going on there is Congress went
- 12 through and struck a series of five audit requirements that GAO
- 13 was subject to. And the title of that section is: "Repeal of
- 14 Certain Audits, Studies, and Reviews of the Government
- 15 Accountability Office."
- 16 And so I -- you know, we got here in response to the
- 17 question of: Is that GAO language still a part of the
- 18 appropriation? It's not. And I'm just -- what I'm endeavoring
- 19 to do is to clarify that I think that the relevance of that
- 20 decision by Congress to strike that language is only that,
- 21 since 2009, the GAO has not been tasked with taking any kind of
- 22 look at what is going on with the -- the appropriations
- 23 language that precedes it.
- 24 THE COURT: So the two GAO reports, I think, that have
- 25 been issued, one with respect to Mr. Durham and one,

- 1 Mr. Fitzgerald, were those evaluating pre- or post-2009?
- 2 MR. BOVE: So I'm familiar with some analysis of the
- 3 Danforth appointment. Pursuant to this language, the GAO has
- 4 an independent obligation to look at and review expenditures
- 5 and conduct financial audits like this. It's cited -- it's a
- 6 provision of Title 31 that is cited in the Fitzgerald GAO
- 7 opinion.
- 8 And so the two opinions -- there is this argument about
- 9 the GAO looked at some of the Danforth expenditures immediately
- 10 after the Reno Regulations. Our position on that is that there
- 11 was nobody here with the types of interests that President
- 12 Trump has in this case to make the arguments that we're making.
- 13 And so that -- that review was -- was really just based
- 14 on -- was focused on the financial aspects of what was being
- 15 spent in connection with the Danforth investigation, which I
- 16 don't think led to criminal prosecutions and never created the
- 17 type of situation that we have here.
- And then the analysis of the Fitzgerald appointment,
- 19 from what we submit, strongly supports our position here,
- 20 because that was a situation where 515(b) arguably applied
- 21 because Patrick Fitzgerald was a U.S. attorney who had been
- 22 appointed into this -- into that position. And so there was a
- 23 very different analysis on the statutory questions that we
- 24 talked about on Friday.
- 25 And in addition to that, in that case -- I think that

- 1 it was James Comey as acting -- struck -- or said
- 2 Mr. Fitzgerald is not subject to the Reno Regulations, which
- 3 are the relevant restriction on the independence of Jack Smith
- 4 that is, I think, a powerful part of our motion.
- 5 THE COURT: Okay. So, now, that we've isolated the
- 6 particular statute, my question is: Is there any cap to the
- 7 funding?
- 8 MR. BOVE: No. And I think that's part of the reason,
- 9 from a separation of powers perspective, to be very wary of
- 10 how -- who can access this and why, and especially in the
- 11 context of a criminal defendant with important rights in a
- 12 proceeding like this, for the Court to take a hard look, a look
- 13 that, we submit, has not been taken, based on some of the
- 14 arguments we've made, in any other case.
- 15 THE COURT: Are you familiar with any authority on the
- 16 constitutionality of fully unbounded appropriations?
- 17 MR. BOVE: I -- we -- especially following the CFPB
- 18 decision, which, I think, gives a -- "no" is the short answer,
- 19 that we're not making an argument that the --
- 20 THE COURT: In CFPB, was there some degree of a cap --
- MR. BOVE: Yes.
- 22 THE COURT: -- for a percentage?
- MR. BOVE: Yes.
- 24 THE COURT: Does that play at all into your argument?
- 25 MR. BOVE: We -- it does in the sense that

- 1 it -- it's -- it highlights the separation of powers problem
- 2 that the Special Counsel's Office is able to access an
- 3 indefinite, infinite budget to fund at least, you know, at this
- 4 point, two prosecutions in different districts. And it's
- 5 exactly the types of concerns that were raised in the hearings
- 6 that preceded the Reno Regulations, that there's no check on
- 7 the scope of what's going on here.
- 8 And so it's relevant -- the lack of a cap is relevant
- 9 to the separation of powers point that we're making.
- 10 THE COURT: All right. Okay. You can resume your
- 11 argument.
- MR. BOVE: So with other -- the phrase "other law" --
- as I said, we are just going to incorporate our statutory
- 14 arguments. But there's one piece here that the government is
- 15 making an argument that's a little bit different than some of
- 16 the things that we talked about on Friday. And the argument is
- 17 that the Reno Regulations can serve as, quote, "other law" for
- 18 purposes of this appropriation. And I just want to talk a
- 19 little bit about that, because that's just not right.
- On Friday, the government's argument at the Reno
- 21 Regulations, I think, was that they can be rescinded at any
- 22 time, and that's one of the reasons that the Attorney General
- 23 has a check on the autonomy and the authority of Jack Smith.
- 24 But that very same feature of these regulations mean that they
- 25 are not, quote, "other law" for purposes of this appropriation.

- 1 And this is really an Administrative Procedures Act issue, and
- 2 it goes to the difference between a substantive regulation and
- 3 a regulation that is intended to serve as not a substantive
- 4 rule, which is the language in the Federal Register relating to
- 5 the Reno Regulations.
- 6 And if Your Honor looks at Chrysler v. Brown, this is a
- 7 Supreme Court case from 1979, the cite is 441 U.S. 281. That's
- 8 a case that talks about this distinction and goes to great
- 9 length to address the issue of what types of regulations have
- 10 the force of law, a phrase that I'm mindful the Nixon court
- 11 used with respect to the Watergate regulations. Those
- 12 regulations did not have this language about, "This is not a
- 13 substantive rule."
- 14 And so because of that carveout, that Attorney General
- 15 Reno placed on the current regulations that are at issue, these
- 16 regulations cannot be other law for purposes of the
- 17 appropriation under Chrysler. And there is similar language in
- a case called Perez by the Supreme Court at 575 U.S. 92.
- And so that's just, sort of, a technical point that I
- 20 wanted to make, that I think that that's a foreclosed argument.
- 21 That the government, to establish the appropriateness of
- 22 accessing this appropriation, based on other law, has to look
- 23 to these Title 28 statutes. For the reasons we discussed on
- 24 Friday, we submit that they cannot do that.
- 25 THE COURT: In the GAO report, was there some

- 1 discussion of the regulations and some characterization of the
- 2 regulations as not substantive? I'm summarizing, but I believe
- 3 there was some comment on the regulations in the direction that
- 4 you're speaking.
- 5 MR. BOVE: I -- so I don't think that the -- at least
- 6 the GAO was not focused on this argument directly, but there is
- 7 a footnote in the GAO report, Footnote 4, that makes an
- 8 important distinction between the old part 600 regulations, the
- 9 regulations that preceded the Reno Regulations, and the current
- 10 ones. And the distinction being -- the way that the GAO framed
- 11 it was, they're looking at the D.C. circuit's analysis, and the
- 12 D.C. circuit is saying basically, well, the Iran-Contra
- 13 regulations, which included the promulgation of the old part of
- 14 600 --
- 15 THE COURT: Uh-huh.
- MR. BOVE: -- those basically mirror the Ethics in
- 17 Government Act. We don't see any support for the proposition
- 18 that the Reno Regulations do the same thing. The GAO is, of
- 19 course, exactly right. The Reno Regulations, in most respects,
- 20 do the opposite.
- THE COURT: When you say "do the opposite," you mean
- 22 what?
- MR. BOVE: They are restrictions on the independence of
- 24 any Special Counsel appointed pursuant to that authority that
- 25 did not exist at all in the Ethics in Government Act and in the

- 1 prior version of part 600 that was at issue in the Iran-Contra
- 2 regulations, in the Nofziger regulations, and in the savings
- 3 and loan regulations.
- 4 Because that -- that old 600, which mirrored the Ethics
- 5 in Government Act, granted the -- the regulatory Special
- 6 Counsel sort of appointed pursuant to those regs when the EGA
- 7 had lapsed. It was giving them authority that mirrored, almost
- 8 identically, the independent counsel from the Ethics in
- 9 Government Act.
- 10 THE COURT: Okay.
- 11 All right. Okay. Anything further with -- with
- 12 respect to the "other law"?
- MR. BOVE: No, Judge.
- 14 THE COURT: What cases exist on the subject of
- 15 potential remedies in the area of Appropriations Clause
- 16 matters?
- MR. BOVE: We are -- we are focused in the same -- I
- 18 think this is why it came up in the context of standing. A few
- 19 minutes ago, we were focused on McIntosh, the 9th Circuit, and
- 20 Stone, which obviously came out against us in the District of
- 21 Columbia.
- 22 I think --
- THE COURT: Well, you're seeking dismissal here, but I
- 24 don't understand your motion to be seeking any sort of
- 25 injunction on continued spending. Is that correct?

- 1 MR. BOVE: That's correct.
- 2 THE COURT: Okay. So you're seeking one remedy less
- 3 than what was sought in McIntosh; correct?
- 4 MR. BOVE: Well, I think that what happened in McIntosh
- 5 is that, at the end of the opinion, the 9th Circuit says: We
- 6 defer to the district courts on the issue of remedy, but this
- 7 appropriations language under Appropriations Clause analysis
- 8 restricts the ability of DOJ to spend money on continued
- 9 prosecutions.
- 10 And so DOJ and the district courts will have to make a
- 11 decision about -- in that case, there was an evidentiary -- a
- 12 fact question about whether compliance with state law warranted
- 13 access to the appropriation that was at issue. And if that
- 14 fact question was answered in favor of the defendants, what is
- 15 going to happen next?
- 16 And we took a look at what happened next, because there
- 17 is ten cases consolidated in McIntosh and one of them, docketed
- in the Eastern District of California at 13-cr-294, led to the
- 19 government dismissing the charges against three defendants
- 20 pursuant to Rule 48. And if you look at that filing, which is
- 21 at ECF Number 170 on that ED CAL docket, what you see is the
- 22 government saying: We can't meet our evidentiary burden. We
- 23 can't establish that we should have access to this
- 24 appropriation and, therefore, we acknowledge that we can't
- 25 proceed with the case."

- And so our position is that the McIntosh 9th Circuit
- 2 analysis foreshadowed that type of outcome, and that that's
- 3 ultimately what happened when the government recognized that it
- 4 should not be accessing the appropriation in -- after the
- 5 courts interpreted the way it applied.
- 6 THE COURT: Okay. Are you -- I think there is some
- 7 discussion in your brief about comparing the degree of
- 8 independence of the -- the independent counsel under the
- 9 Independent Counsel Act versus the degree of independence under
- 10 the current regulatory framework.
- 11 Are you still persisting in that position, that there's
- 12 a mismatch in the degree of independence?
- MR. BOVE: Yes. There's a mismatch and, as I said, an
- 14 irreconcilable difference between the government's position on
- independence under the Appointments Clause the Appropriations
- 16 Clause. They have to say, on Friday, that they are not
- 17 independent; and today, they have to say that they are
- independent to be able access this appropriation.
- And our position is that both cannot be true. And I'd
- 20 would like to, if I could --
- 21 THE COURT: So setting that potential tension aside for
- 22 a moment, what, in fact, though, is the comparison? If you
- 23 were to do a side-by-side of the Special Counsel regulations
- 24 versus the Independent Counsel Act, what do you say is more or
- less restrictive in the current posture?

- 1 MR. BOVE: So a few things, Judge. The -- start out
- 2 with the -- who's appointing the special prosecutor?
- 3 In -- under the EGA, it is the Special Division in the District
- 4 of Columbia ultimately making the appointment. And in at least
- 5 one example, when it was time -- when -- when the EGA was
- 6 renewed and it was time to decide what was going to happen with
- 7 Bob Fiske, that panel coming out differently than DOJ.
- 8 So that's -- under the Ethics in Government Act, judges
- 9 decide who the Special Counsel will be. Under the Reno
- 10 Regulations, the Attorney General decides. So that's one.
- 11 The second is the -- the authority that is sort of
- 12 invested in whoever is appointed into that role. And so under
- 13 the Ethics in Government Act, under 594(a), I think it's pretty
- 14 clear that Congress contemplated giving Special Counsel,
- 15 appointed pursuant to that provision, the full and independent
- 16 authority to exercise all investigative and prosecutorial
- 17 functions and powers of DOJ and the Attorney General. So that
- 18 the Ethics in Government Act created what was, in effect, a
- 19 parallel Attorney General, somebody with that level of
- 20 authority, appointed by courts, not the Attorney General who
- 21 was in power at the time.
- 22 The Reno Regulations are very different in this
- 23 respect. And so this is -- you know, I'm at point two of the
- 24 differences in independence. It's comparing 594(a) to a couple
- of provisions in the Reno Regulations.

- One is that the introductory -- introductory language
- 2 in the Federal Register, which says -- and this is for the Reno
- 3 Regulations -- says that: "Ultimate responsibility for the
- 4 matter and how it is handled will continue to rest with the
- 5 Attorney General."
- 6 THE COURT: That language doesn't feature in the
- 7 ultimate codified rule; correct?
- 8 MR. BOVE: That's correct. There are some features of
- 9 it that I think --
- 10 THE COURT: But what to make of that? Does it actually
- 11 form part of the regulation?
- MR. BOVE: It informs the analysis -- it's not part of
- 13 the regulation, but it informs the analysis of what these terms
- 14 that I'm about to describe mean, and how both the DOJ and
- 15 Congress felt at this important period, for our motion, in
- 16 1999. A period where there was a hearing on whether or not to
- 17 renew the Ethics in Government Act, a period where Eric Holder
- 18 went to that hearing and said: The Department of Justice
- 19 thinks that the Ethics in Government Act should not be renewed
- 20 because the special prosecutors appointed to that provision,
- among other things, are too independent.
- 22 And here the restrictions -- well, they didn't get that
- 23 far at the hearing, but the point was that was very much
- 24 language in the Federal Register that's consistent with the
- 25 hearing that led to the EGA not being renewed.

1 And so where do we see that that's a relevant 2 comparison to 549(a) in the Reno Regulations? 600.6 on the 3 books right now gives the Special Counsel, appointed pursuant to that req, the authority of all investigative and 4 prosecutorial functions of any United States attorney. So 5 6 the -- you know, instead of the full scope of the authority of 7 the Attorney General under the EGA -- that's 594(a) -- 600.6 8 restricts this to the authority of a United States attorney. 9 And there is another part that I think is important 10 here; it's 600.7, paragraph B. That paragraph contemplates a 11 situation where the Attorney General can review action by a 12 special counsel appointed pursuant to the Reno Regulations, and decide that -- that the action, quote, "should not be pursued." 13 14 That is that countermanding concept, the veto concept 15 that came up on Friday and it's relevant here. This -- this is 16 part of it. This is point 2 on why a Special Counsel appointed 17 pursuant to the Reno Regulations is not independent for 18 purposes of the appropriation that we're talking about. 19 Point 3, this is a --20 THE COURT: But you've argued that the Special Counsel 21 is taking inconsistent positions. But are you just doing the 22 same thing flip-flopped? So for appropriations, you want to 23 say there is insufficient independence, but on the Appointments 24 Clause matter with respect to superior/inferior, you're taking 25 the opposite view?

- 1 MR. BOVE: No. I -- our principal point -- and the
- 2 record, I think, is largely unrebutted. And there was an
- 3 exchange at the rebuttal on Friday, where no information was
- 4 provided about whether the Attorney General is actually
- 5 overseeing this.
- 6 Our principal point is on the Appointments Clause.
- 7 But -- because we understand that this motion and the text --
- 8 it has two alternative bases. And I think, you know, we're
- 9 very focused on the other law part, which is, the positions are
- 10 consistent there. This is an alternative argument. I have
- 11 given you our points --
- 12 THE COURT: Okay. So on the -- so this is -- I
- 13 understand that your position on other law is the same, but
- 14 with respect to the degree of independence, what I'm hearing is
- that it's an alternative argument to the principal submission
- which is that there is no other law; is that correct?
- MR. BOVE: Correct.
- And just that these things can't mean two separate
- 19 outcomes on the -- based on the text that we're dealing with
- 20 and the body of law that we're dealing with. Our position is
- 21 that there is not sufficient oversight; our position is on the
- 22 Appointments Clause.
- 23 THE COURT: But for the appropriations issue, if
- 24 the -- if the prosecutor had to be equal to the independent
- 25 counsel in the statutory scheme, then why would Congress have

- 1 referenced other law? Presumably, they don't need to be exact.
- 2 MR. BOVE: I think that the context of what Congress
- 3 was doing in this appropriation, historically, is important.
- 4 And I was hoping to cover some of that to get -- because I
- 5 think it does bear on what they meant by "other law." And at
- 6 the headline level, what was going on when this appropriation
- 7 went on the books, is that there was, admittedly, some
- 8 litigation over the Ethics in Government Act. But a week
- 9 before this appropriation went on the books, the Ethics in
- 10 Government Act had been renewed. And so it's in that setting
- 11 that Congress uses some other language, I think, with some --
- 12 with full confidence that the law -- that the EGA would be on
- 13 the books for another five years.
- 14 And what else was going on? The other law that was in
- 15 play mirrored exactly the Ethics in Government Act. What was
- 16 going on was that the Watergate regulations gave the full scope
- of the type of independence that the Ethics in Government Act
- 18 ultimately adopted. And I have said, the Iran-Contra
- 19 regulations, which gave rise to that version of part 600, the
- 20 predecessor version that mirrors the Ethics in Government Act
- 21 were on the books. It happened again with the appointment of
- 22 James McKay and the Nofziger regulations and then, I think,
- 23 once more, with Bob Fiske, a regulatory independent counsel
- 24 appointed pursuant to the old part 600 that had the similar
- 25 levels of independence.

- So when Congress, in 1987 in this appropriation, uses
- 2 the term "other law," they are saying that in the context of a
- 3 series of regulatory actions and litigation in court over what
- 4 it means to be independent. And at that point, there was every
- 5 suggestion that the political balance -- the people involved in
- 6 that were comfortable with the level of independence that was
- 7 reflected in the Ethics in Government Act. There
- 8 wasn't -- it's not as if when this appropriation went on the
- 9 books, that the Reno Regulations were in play and Congress was
- 10 contemplating that at some point, years later, there would be a
- 11 discussion about whether this was really the right path. That
- 12 wasn't foreseeable to them at all.
- And I think that that historical context, all of these
- 14 regulations, the version of part 600 that was on the books at
- 15 the time, the fact that the Ethics in Government Act had just
- 16 been renewed, all of those features very much bear on, what did
- 17 Congress mean by independent counsel in 1987?
- And that's the ultimate question. And I drill a little
- 19 bit of a temporal distinction with respect to how we think the
- 20 Court should look at "other law," which is a present
- 21 analysis -- analysis at present of whether there is another law
- 22 that allowed for this appointment, versus what it means to be
- 23 independent counsel, lowercase, in this appropriation.
- We think "other law" is not an ambiguous statutory term
- 25 in the appropriation, and so what has to happen is basically

- 1 the analysis that we talked a little bit this morning and on
- 2 Friday, is there another law in November of 2022 that justified
- 3 this appointment? But on -- when you get to this question,
- 4 independent counsel, lowercase, there is ambiguity. And so
- 5 then the question is: What did Congress mean when this
- 6 appropriation was put on the books?
- 7 And so I won't go back through it, but I've talked a
- 8 little bit about the historical context. But another place to
- 9 look is the conference report that accompanied this
- appropriation, and that conference report is numbered 100-498.
- 11 And there are two parts of it that I want to flag. And this
- is -- it's a very long report. I don't have the page numbers,
- 13 but it's at the very end.
- 14 And Congress -- the conference addresses the two -- we
- 15 talked about three textual provisions of this appropriation at
- 16 the very beginning. The first refers to -- it starts: "That
- of the funds appropriated to DOJ." And there is a specific
- 18 reference to activities of any independent counsel. It's the
- 19 language that precedes the "provided further." The conference
- 20 report makes clear that that money was intended to basically
- 21 refund expenditures that had been made on continuing
- 22 resolutions while DOJ was waiting for the Ethics in Government
- 23 Act to be renewed. And so that explains what Congress meant at
- 24 the first -- for that first --
- 25 THE COURT: Why is there a need to resort to

- 1 legislative history?
- 2 MR. BOVE: Because it's, we submit, an ambiguous term.
- 3 So we need to look at the context, the historical context of
- 4 what Congress would have been thinking about, the issues they
- 5 were grappling with when they chose the phrase, lowercase,
- 6 "independent counsel," and then, also, to look to the committee
- 7 report to get a very specific sense, the compromises that led
- 8 to these languages choices.
- 9 And I think that the next part of the conference report
- 10 bears directly on the question of this note to 28 U.S.C. 591.
- 11 And the conference report there is -- the discussion is limited
- 12 to the Ethics in Government Act. They don't even address what
- other law might or could mean. And I think that's because at
- 14 this point, as I said, the Ethics in Government Act had been
- 15 renewed, and every regulatory action from DOJ contemplated the
- 16 same level of independence that Congress had implemented in the
- 17 Ethics in Government Act.
- And so who cares? We care about that, Judge, because
- 19 looking at what "independent counsel" means in this
- 20 appropriation, we submit it's not consistent with what -- what
- 21 we have under the Reno Regulations.
- 22 THE COURT: All right. You had identified your view as
- 23 to some of the distinctions between the statutory framework and
- the Special Counsel regulations. I think you'd addressed 600.6
- 25 and 600.7(b).

- 1 Any other areas to identify? 2 MR. BOVE: Yes, Judge. The third that I would flag relates to the policies and 3 procedures to which special counsel are subject. And so under 4 the Ethics in Government Act at 594(f)(1), that restricted 5 independent counsel to complying with, quote, "written or other 6 established policies of DOJ" -- quote, "respecting enforcement 7 8 of the criminal laws." 9 So the Ethics in Government Act restricted policy compliance to written policies, and not -- not all DOJ 10 11 policies, only DOJ policies that concerned enforcement of the criminal laws. 12 13 In the Reno Regulations, at 607, paragraph A, the 14 Department of Justice expanded that language to cover rules, 15 regulations, procedures, practices, and policies. And I think 16 practices, in particular, is a very important limitation on a 17 special counsel's ability to operate in a way that is 18 consistent with the Reno Regulations, relevant to what was 19 required under the Ethics in Government Act, written or other established policies. And, for example, practices is very much 20 21 an issue in our selective prosecution motion; practices is very 22 much an issue for the Justice Manual provisions that we have 23 raised relating to election interference; and practices is
- 25 interference we've raised regarding the 90-day rule that's

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especially an issue with respect to the distinct election

- 1 discussed in the Horowitz Report. And these are the kinds of
- 2 things that we're told, pursuant to the Reno Regulations, this
- 3 special counsel is subject to, that are very different from
- 4 what was going on under the Ethics in Government Act.
- 5 And what happens when there is a conflict? I think
- 6 that's another important question. From -- as best I can read,
- 7 the Ethics in Government Act really conferred discretion on the
- 8 Special Counsel to make decisions about when, whether, and how
- 9 they were in compliance with the policies that were at issue
- 10 under the EGA. The Reno Regulations in the same paragraph,
- 11 607, paragraph A, contemplate a consultation with the Attorney
- 12 General, and they contemplate that there may be situations
- 13 where the Attorney General sort of chooses -- charts a
- 14 different course for the -- for the Special Counsel. And so I
- 15 think that that's another important consideration.
- 16 The last distinction between the two that I would like
- 17 to draw, relates to the removal provisions. And so the removal
- 18 provision of the Ethics in Government Act is 596(a), and it's
- 19 focused on removal for good cause, disability, and conditions
- 20 that substantially impair performance. It really -- I -- the
- 21 text of that provision, 596(a), does not contemplate removal
- 22 over disagreements between the Attorney General and the Special
- 23 Counsel relating to how a case should proceed, disagreements
- 24 relating to, you know, within the bounds of prosecutorial
- 25 discretion, how that discretion should be exercised.

- 1 The -- the removal provisions -- and sorry. One more
- 2 point on that.
- 3 Justice Scalia talked about what good cause meant under
- 4 the Ethics in Government Act in his dissent in Morrison, and
- 5 talked about how that was a restriction. And he cited to a
- 6 report that related to the recent renewal of the Ethics in
- 7 Government Act in '87 that I referenced, that basically equated
- 8 good cause with misconduct. So that's -- that's a very high
- 9 bar and hard to imagine reaching that in most situations. But
- 10 the Reno Regulations do use that same phrase "good cause," but
- 11 they include that the -- good cause will -- can consist of a
- 12 violation of DOJ policy, which is, I think, a lower threshold
- 13 for -- excuse me -- for removal than what we had in the Ethics
- 14 in Government Act.
- 15 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Anything further on the
- 16 motion?
- 17 MR. BOVE: The last point, Judge, on terms of remedy --
- 18 we've talked about McIntosh and what I think are important
- 19 subsequent district court proceedings. The other case that,
- 20 sort of, at least in its reasoning, does -- operates in a
- 21 similar way to McIntosh is -- I apologize to the court
- 22 reporter -- Bilodeau, B-I-L-O-D-E-A-U, which is a First Circuit
- 23 case from 2022 that cites McIntosh at 24 F.4th 705. And the
- 24 language I'm focused on there is: We agree with this reading
- 25 of the rider and conclude, as the Ninth Circuit did, that the

- 1 "DOJ may not spend funds to bring prosecutions if doing so
- 2 prevents a state from giving practical effect to its medical
- 3 marijuana laws." In other words, if doing so is inconsistent
- 4 with the restrictions that are in the appropriation.
- 5 And I don't think there -- there is no substantive or
- 6 material distinction to be drawn between the affirmative
- 7 restriction on expenditures at issue in cases like McIntosh and
- 8 Bilodeau, and in the language of the appropriation that we're
- 9 focused on here. The bottom line, for purposes of our motion,
- 10 is that under the Appropriations Clause, in order for the
- 11 separation of powers to operate as it must under the
- 12 Constitution, the Special Counsel can only draw an
- 13 appropriation where his conduct, his activities, meet the text
- 14 of what the appropriation authorized. And because there is no
- other law, and because for purposes of this motion we also
- think that independence is a real problem, this appropriation
- 17 should not be accessed.
- 18 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Bove.
- 19 Let me hear from counsel for the Special Counsel.
- Good morning.
- 21 MR. PEARCE: Good morning. May it please the Court.
- 22 James Pearce for the United States.
- 23 Consistent with long-standing Department of Justice
- 24 practice, the government has funded the Special Counsel through
- 25 a Congressionally-enacted permanent and definite appropriation

- 1 passed in December of 1987. Under the plain terms of that law,
- 2 the Special Counsel is an independent counsel appointed by
- 3 other law, including 28, United States Code, 515(b) and 533(1),
- 4 as we discussed extensively last week. But even if the
- 5 permanent and definite appropriations were not available --
- 6 THE COURT: So you agree that the "other law" is a
- 7 statutory law that you've pointed to elsewhere?
- 8 MR. PEARCE: We do. I think I heard my friend on the
- 9 other say -- side suggest we were relying on the regulations.
- 10 We think it is the statutory law.
- 11 THE COURT: Okay.
- MR. PEARCE: And the regulations don't provide
- 13 the -- independently for the appointment, but certainly, as we
- 14 discussed last week, once in place, are binding while extant.
- 15 THE COURT: And you agree this is -- this is a
- 16 limitless appropriation?
- MR. PEARCE: Consistent with the idea of a permanent
- 18 indefinite appropriation, when Congress enacted it using that
- 19 term, that is the function that it had. There are a handful of
- 20 other permanent and definite appropriations. It does have that
- 21 function.
- 22 THE COURT: Can you point me to any comparable
- 23 limitless appropriation?
- MR. PEARCE: Yes. So 31, United States Code -- I think
- 25 it's 1504 has one. Let me see if I can find it. There are two

- in 31, United States Code. One has to do with refunding moneys
- 2 that were improperly deposited into the treasury, and the other
- 3 is for paying of judgments. I can give the Court the statutory
- 4 cites.
- 5 THE COURT: I have the first one. 31 U.S.C. 1504.
- 6 MR. PEARCE: Yeah. I apologize, because I had it on
- 7 hand and I cannot seem to find it.
- 8 THE COURT: That's okay. We'll revisit this.
- 9 MR. PEARCE: Yeah. But the point is there are at
- 10 least -- so, the GAO has issued something called the -- it's
- 11 something like "The Handbook on Federal Appropriations Law"
- where it defines a permanent indefinite appropriation,
- 13 explaining that it is not limited by time or limited by amount,
- 14 and gives some examples, including the two that I have
- 15 mentioned.
- 16 THE COURT: Okay. And neither of those examples
- 17 contains any other formula or percentage or other means by
- 18 which to impose at least some degree of a cap. And I know in
- 19 the CFPB case, most recently, there was a percentage threshold
- 20 which features in that decision as one reason why it wasn't
- 21 problematic.
- 22 MR. PEARCE: So a couple of different responses, but I
- 23 found the cites, if I can give them --
- THE COURT: Okay.
- 25 MR. PEARCE: -- to the Court, and then address the

- 1 question.
- 2 THE COURT: Let's do that.
- 3 MR. PEARCE: So at 31 U.S.C. 1304 -- I think I said
- 4 1504 -- so 1304 addresses the payment of judgments against the
- 5 United States. And then 31, United States Code, 1322(b)(2) is
- 6 the provision that deals with refunding amounts erroneously
- 7 collected and deposited into the treasury.
- 8 I think the Court's question involved whether there's
- 9 any other authority that addresses situations where there is
- 10 not some kind of a cap. I'm not aware of any law, and I don't
- 11 read, actually, the Supreme Court's decision in the recent CFPB
- 12 case to rely on the fact that there was the inflation -- the
- 13 cap that was adjusted for inflation that came out of the
- 14 federal -- the -- I think it was the Federal Reserve Board.
- 15 The Court described that by way of background, but certainly it
- 16 just said source and purpose is what's required to comply with
- 17 the Appropriations Clause.
- 18 THE COURT: Well, the thrust of that decision does seem
- 19 to be repeatedly focused on the existence of a cap,
- 20 which -- which does play into the majority opinions rationale.
- 21 But setting that aside for a moment, as far as the
- 22 current -- the current appropriation, do you agree with your
- 23 friend on the other side that the statutory language that we're
- 24 looking at is the -- provided further, ending with the words
- 25 "other law"?

- 1 MR. PEARCE: Yes. I think there's other pieces that
- 2 are relevant; for example, the reference earlier to -- you
- 3 know, capital letter, Independent Counsel, and then the later
- 4 reference to independent counsel in lowercase that suggests
- 5 that -- the difference between the two.
- 6 THE COURT: Okay. So -- but I want to make sure that I
- 7 have exactly -- what are we talking about when we say 28 U.S.C.
- 8 591 note? What's actually in the note? What is surviving
- 9 statutory text?
- 10 MR. PEARCE: So I'm not sure precisely what remains in
- 11 the note, but I can tell you that "a permanent and definite
- 12 appropriation established," that is still, you know, operative
- 13 language on which the -- the appropriation is based.
- 14 THE COURT: So is it just what I have indicated?
- 15 Starts with "provided further, 28 U.S.C. 591 note," and it ends
- 16 with the words "other law"?
- 17 MR. PEARCE: That is what I understand my friends on
- 18 the other side to challenge, and I think that is the core of
- 19 what the Court is to focus on. I don't under -- frankly,
- 20 the -- in between the quotation marks, the 28 U.S.C. 591 note,
- 21 I don't think that that plays any role in the analysis here.
- 22 The only point that I was making was where -- earlier
- 23 in this appropriation, there was the specific appropriation of
- 24 an amount not to exceed \$1 million that says "related to the
- 25 activities of any independent counsel." That just furthers the

- 1 distinction between the statutory independent counsel under the
- 2 Ethics in Government Act from independent counsel appointed
- 3 pursuant to other law, which is, of course, what we in the
- 4 Justice Department, for at least eight special counsels, has
- 5 relied on in using the permanent indefinite appropriation.
- 6 THE COURT: Okay. I'm still not entirely clear on what
- 7 statutory language survives for the appropriation. And I just
- 8 want to make sure that I'm looking at the surviving codified
- 9 text --
- MR. PEARCE: Uh-huh.
- 11 THE COURT: -- in current law. So is it -- is it that
- one reference, or is it some broader public law? Because I
- 13 understand there's been various amendments over the years to
- 14 the language.
- So can you just clarify for the Court what specific
- 16 statutory language encompasses the appropriation that we're
- 17 discussing?
- 18 MR. PEARCE: "Provided further, 28 U.S.C. 591 note,
- 19 that a permanent indefinite appropriation is established within
- 20 the Department of Justice to pay all necessary expenses of
- 21 investigations and prosecutions by independent counsel
- 22 appointed pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. 591, et seq,
- 23 or other law."
- 24 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. All right.
- 25 MR. PEARCE: So we think the principal question -- it

- 1 really boils down to what is an independent counsel? And the
- 2 regulations, the GAO opinions, the two courts' decisions that
- 3 have addressed this, both in the Stone and the Hunter Biden
- 4 case, as well as the longstanding practice of the department
- 5 funding eight special counsels under this appropriation with
- 6 Congressional acquiescence, all answers that in the
- 7 affirmative, that the Special Counsel is an independent
- 8 counsel.
- 9 Now, I'm not going to --
- 10 THE COURT: The Doctrine of Congressional Acquiescence
- 11 is not the most robust doctrine, I think case law would
- 12 indicate. So can we just focus on the text of the "other law"
- 13 and just confirm -- I take your position to be that your
- 14 arguments carry over completely from -- from the -- from the
- 15 Appointments Clause context.
- MR. PEARCE: Yes. And I have no reason to repeat them,
- 17 unless the Court wants to hear them.
- 18 THE COURT: No, no. That's okay.
- Okay. And you agree, of course, that Special Counsel
- 20 in this case was not appointed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 591, which
- 21 doesn't exist; so we're focused again on the other law piece.
- MR. PEARCE: Yes. And relying on the same statutes we
- 23 discussed on Friday.
- 24 THE COURT: Okay. Now, I noticed there were some
- 25 reports on the Special Counsel's Office web page indicating the

- 1 expenditures for six months. Is this a six-month practice, to
- 2 issue statements of expenditures?
- 3 MR. PEARCE: Yes. It's my understanding that for
- 4 six-month periods that run from March to September, Special
- 5 Counsel's Offices -- and one can find them for, I believe, all
- 6 eight that I have mentioned -- issue their expenditure reports.
- 7 The precise timing of it, I think, is not always identical, but
- 8 they do come out in six-month increments.
- 9 THE COURT: So the last report would have been issued
- 10 when?
- 11 MR. PEARCE: I believe the last report covers the
- 12 period ending in September 2023. There is a report that is
- 13 due -- that ends of March 2024 that has not been made public
- 14 yet.
- THE COURT: How long does it take for the reports to
- 16 become public? Because we're in June now.
- MR. PEARCE: That's what I was just alluding to a
- 18 moment ago. That is something that is, I think, outside of our
- 19 office's control, that there is -- the GAO -- well, actually,
- 20 I'm not sure if the GAO is involved in that specific portion of
- 21 it. I think, from just looking at the past reports, and this
- 22 is not a scientific answer, but sometimes it's taken as long as
- 23 a year. I think in -- in -- for this Special Counsel, it is
- 24 considerably less of a period of that.
- 25 But, for example, in our supplemental brief, we, I

- 1 think, cited a report that involved a report of four different
- 2 independent counsels, three under the Ethics in Government Act,
- 3 one independent regulatory counsel. And that had issued a full
- 4 year after the period that it covered. These come out more
- 5 quickly, but I cannot give the Court a more precise date.
- 6 THE COURT: And that's because -- what is the review
- 7 process? I know the regulations reference the initial
- 8 establishment of a budget and review by the Attorney General,
- 9 but what is the continuing review process for the budget
- 10 proposals and the expenditures?
- 11 MR. PEARCE: I am -- I don't know precisely, other
- 12 than -- what I just understand is generally accounting --
- 13 generally accepted accounting practices, to track the funds and
- 14 make sure that they are enumerated for purposes of identifying
- 15 an expenditure.
- Beyond that, I don't have anything I can share with the
- 17 Court.
- 18 THE COURT: Okay. So, then, in terms of looking at the
- 19 actual expenditures, just taking one as an example, there is
- one from the period of November 18th of '22 through March of
- 21 2023 with total SCO expenditures at 5.4 million. And then if
- 22 you refer further down in the report, there's a reference to
- 23 DOJ component expenses for another 3.8 million, again, for the
- 24 six-month period.
- 25 I just have a clarifying factual question. The

- 1 3.81 million coming for, what is described as, expenses
- 2 supporting the Special Counsel's Office, are those also being
- 3 paid for through the permanent indefinite appropriation?
- 4 MR. PEARCE: Top line answer, I don't know. I believe
- 5 it is true that that -- that -- well, it is paid -- everything
- 6 is paid for under the permanent indefinite appropriation, with
- 7 the caveat that -- and I'm not sure if this is in the
- 8 regulation -- but there is some sense that for individuals,
- 9 like myself, who are on detail from other parts of the Justice
- 10 Department, consistent with the regulations saying, "All parts
- of the Justice Department should support the Special Counsel,"
- 12 I believe that those individuals are funded by their existing
- 13 components. But I don't want to say I'm certain about that.
- 14 That is my understanding, however.
- THE COURT: So I'm just trying to just get a sense,
- 16 just monetarily, for that six-month period. It says, "Total
- 17 SCO expenditures, 5.4 million," but is it really more like 9
- 18 when you include the expenditures for the DOJ component
- 19 expenses that are also being paid for by the indefinite
- 20 appropriation?
- 21 MR. PEARCE: I -- I am not sure, is the -- is the
- 22 precise answer. I mean, we can certainly give the Court
- 23 something supplementally to enumerate with more precision, to
- 24 the extent that's consistent with our role in providing
- 25 information to the Court.

- 1 But I don't know the answer --
- 2 THE COURT: I think it would be helpful, since these
- 3 are public documents, just trying to understand what the full
- 4 universe of expenditures looks like. Since this is an
- 5 Appropriations Clause challenge, I do think it provides some
- 6 helpful context for the amount of money that is actually being
- 7 spent.
- 8 MR. PEARCE: I think that's fair. But just to be
- 9 clear, there is certainly no case, of which I'm aware, where
- 10 any court has suggested -- or at least any court that hasn't
- 11 been overruled or reversed -- that the total amount of the
- 12 expenditure is relevant to an Appropriations Clause challenge.
- I agree with the Court --
- 14 THE COURT: But when it's limitless, I think that there
- is a separation of powers concern that one needs to take a look
- 16 at.
- Don't interrupt, please.
- MR. PEARCE: I'm sorry, Your Honor.
- 19 THE COURT: And so that's the nature of my question.
- 20 MR. PEARCE: Could I just address that with one point,
- 21 Your Honor? If not, I'm happy to just respond, but I -- there
- is one thing I would like to say in response to that.
- THE COURT: You may.
- MR. PEARCE: So I agree that that is absolutely -- what
- 25 you have just described is absolutely the thrust of the 5th

- 1 Circuit's opinion in the CFPB case that the Court then -- that
- 2 the Supreme Court then reversed.
- 3 And so I do think that there was that very separation
- 4 of powers concern there, but I read the Supreme Court's
- 5 decision saying what we are focused on is source and purpose.
- 6 And simply describing the cap is actually, essentially,
- 7 entirely doing away with the rationale that there is a
- 8 separation of powers problem.
- 9 THE COURT: Well, the Supreme Court, did it have
- 10 occasion to address the remedy, however, in CFPB, because it
- 11 found a lawful appropriation, and then -- so it didn't really
- 12 need to cover what to do about it? Would you agree with that?
- MR. PEARCE: I would certainly agree that there was no
- 14 cause to address remedy there.
- THE COURT: Okay. All right. Now, let's see here.
- 16 You've mentioned in your opposition that DOJ could readily fund
- 17 this through an alternative source. I wanted to give you an
- 18 opportunity to identify what that other alternative would be.
- MR. PEARCE: So it's at a relatively high level of
- 20 generality, but the Department of Justice has appropriated, at
- 21 least in the 2023 appropriation cycle, over a billion dollars.
- 22 And I can represent to the Court that the government is
- 23 prepared to use money from -- money that is appropriated to the
- 24 Department of Justice to fund the -- the activities and
- 25 operations of the Special Counsel.

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             A more specific --
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             THE COURT: And that's just through the standard
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     Department of Justice allotment for, let's say, fiscal year
     2024?
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             MR. PEARCE: That is my understanding, yes, Your Honor.
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             THE COURT: What are your views, if any, on any prior
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     expenditures? So to the extent you're -- to the extent, A,
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     there is a need to even tap an alternative funding source,
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     which, again, is to be determined, then what to do, if
10
     anything, about the prior expenditures, in your view?
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             MR. PEARCE: Just so I -- to clarify so I understand
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     the question, on the assumption or on the -- kind of, the
13
     operating hypothesis that we were -- the Special Counsel
     was -- had not been entitled to; correct?
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15
             THE COURT: That's correct.
16
             MR. PEARCE: So I think that retrospectively, there
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     should be no effect or change whatsoever. And there are a
18
     couple of different places that I draw from in making that
19
     point. One, I think the Court, the Supreme Court in a couple
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     of different contexts has suggested that you don't go
21
     retrospectively -- look retrospectively to try to undo acts
22
     that have happened. Most recently -- this is a decision a week
23
     from Friday -- the United States Trustee v. John Hammond [sic]
     involved a challenge under the Constitution's requirement that
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bankruptcy laws be uniform. And there was a disuniformity

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- 1 because there were fees that had been assessed in one place and
- 2 not in others. And the question was all about remedy there,
- 3 and it was, do we have some sort of retro- --
- 4 THE COURT: And I'm sorry. Where is that decision
- 5 coming out of?
- 6 MR. PEARCE: The United States Supreme Court.
- 7 THE COURT: In the Hammons case?
- 8 MR. PEARCE: The Hammons case, yes.
- 9 THE COURT: Yes.
- 10 MR. PEARCE: And the decision was -- or the question
- 11 for decision was: Do we look retrospectively or retroactively,
- or is it a question of prospective parity? And the Court there
- 13 decided prospective parity was appropriate.
- 14 In addition -- and there was some reference in this,
- 15 actually, in some of the amicus filing, and we had a footnote
- 16 on it -- but the de facto officer doctrine which provides --
- 17 and this is cases like Ryder and Nguyen, although those come up
- in the adjudicative context. There is a much older body of law
- 19 starting with a Supreme Court case called Norton v. Shelby
- 20 County from 1885 [sic], that basically says courts
- 21 don't -- it's a -- it's a common law approach because the
- 22 Constitution doesn't prescribe remedies for its own violation.
- 23 But courts don't go back and sort of undo -- if there's a
- 24 violation -- undo everything that has happened before it.
- 25 THE COURT: On that de facto piece, I didn't see a

- 1 substantive response in your opposition or to the Tillman
- 2 brief. It was, I think, flagged in a footnote but not
- 3 addressed. So what is the position of the Special Counsel on
- 4 application of the de facto officer doctrine? Because it
- 5 wasn't briefed.
- 6 MR. PEARCE: And just to be clear, that obviously came
- 7 up in the context of an Appointments Clause or employee
- 8 challenge.
- 9 I think it's -- it's twofold. One is the top-line
- 10 position that I just gave with respect to appropriations, which
- 11 is that we believe that de facto officer doctrine, to the
- 12 extent the Court were to find error or some sort of
- 13 constitutional, or, frankly, statutory violation with either
- 14 the appointments or the appropriations funding clause; but
- 15 then, second, to the extent that the Court is seriously
- 16 entertaining the notion that there is a constitutional or
- 17 funding problem, I actually think it would behoove the Court
- and the parties to have some additional briefing.
- I heard my friend on the other side mention a couple of
- 20 different things that weren't, I think, in their brief or their
- 21 reply. And so to the extent they would rely --
- 22 THE COURT: So this would be supplemental briefing on
- 23 what exactly?
- MR. PEARCE: So if the Court -- and I would -- I think
- 25 the Court should -- should decide the top-line question, and if

- 1 there is a serious -- if the Court is seriously considering
- 2 finding a violation of --
- 3 THE COURT: I'm not indicating anything. I'm simply
- 4 just trying to cover the scope of what's been briefed here.
- 5 One piece was the de facto officer doctrine, and it was
- 6 conspicuously not answered by the Special Counsel in the
- 7 opposition or in the response to the Tillman -- excuse me --
- 8 the constitutional -- well, no, excuse me -- the Tillman brief,
- 9 as I said initially. That's why I'm asking what the position
- 10 is on the de facto officer doctrine. I hear you say that you
- 11 think it would apply if it ever needed to come into the
- 12 picture. And your best authorities for that are?
- MR. PEARCE: As I -- as I was giving sort of. Norton
- 14 v. Shelby County from 1885 is -- is, I think, widely seen as
- 15 the leading case. The more modern versions of it are Ryder and
- 16 Nguyen.
- 17 Again, because this hasn't been briefed, I can let the
- 18 Court know the position of the United States was articulated
- 19 starting at page 26 of the -- of the government's brief in the
- 20 PROMESA Supreme Court case. There is a long discussion of it.
- 21 But if the Court were interested in more information on
- 22 this, then I -- I could -- I do think that some sort of
- 23 supplemental briefing would be appropriate.
- 24 THE COURT: Why was it not included in the initial
- 25 submission if it was -- if it was discussed, at least

- 1 peripherally in the briefing? I just -- it just seemed -- I
- 2 wasn't sure why it wasn't addressed, and it was just footnoted
- 3 but then not developed.
- 4 MR. PEARCE: So the only place that it was meaningfully
- 5 raised was in the Tillman brief, which argued, of course, that
- 6 the Special Counsel is an employee and not an officer at all.
- 7 To be candid with the Court, we find that to be not a
- 8 frivolous, but a -- an argument that finds no support in case
- 9 law and, thus, didn't warrant a developed substantive response
- 10 in that context.
- 11 THE COURT: Okay.
- MR. PEARCE: You obviously have addressed the question
- of remedy for the Appointments Clause. You had some discussion
- 14 with my friend on the other side; perhaps we will have some
- 15 discussion as well. But that is why we didn't see that it was
- 16 appropriate, given space constraints --
- 17 THE COURT: Understood.
- 18 MR. PEARCE: -- to develop it further.
- 19 THE COURT: Okay. Now, let's return to some of those
- 20 initial questions I asked Mr. Bove. There is an argument about
- 21 standing, sort of, in quotes, and I wanted to hear your view on
- 22 that. And I also wanted to hear your view on whether this is,
- 23 in fact, a constitutional challenge.
- MR. PEARCE: So I will go in that order. The standing
- 25 in quotes is because we don't think that while the -- while the

- defendants can raise a motion to dismiss, the relief they seek,
- 2 namely dismissal -- and this ties in, actually, with the
- 3 conversation that we were just having -- doesn't follow from
- 4 a -- a challenge to the -- the funding or Appropriations
- 5 Clause; that's the second question. And there is no Court
- 6 that, I think, has -- has discussed this; right?
- 7 So there was -- Stone had no reason to address the --
- 8 kind of, the remedy question, whether someone was -- because it
- 9 disagreed on the substantive question.
- 10 THE COURT: Of course.
- MR. PEARCE: As to McIntosh, I think that's just a --
- 12 really, a very different case. That was an -- of course, as
- 13 the Court is aware, an appropriations rider. Rather than
- 14 saying: Is there an appropriation that funds the prosecution,
- 15 it was, instead, a -- a rider that prevented the expenditure of
- 16 any federal funds to -- to prosecute.
- 17 THE COURT: But either way, there was an argument that
- 18 there lacked statutory authorization for the expenditure. So
- 19 meaningfully, how do you differentiate the standing inquiry
- 20 between this situation and what the Court in the McIntosh case
- 21 encountered?
- MR. PEARCE: And this is why I'm trying to -- to walk
- 23 back a little bit, this notion of standing. I -- I don't --
- 24 we're not trying to take the position that they can't get up
- 25 here and argue that there is some sort of a problem with the

- 1 funding. It's just it does not flow from that, that there is
- 2 dismissal, if that is, in fact, correct. Frankly, we think
- 3 nothing should happen given the representation that we can fund
- 4 it alternatively.
- 5 Now, I -- I --
- 6 THE COURT: Now, on the -- on the representation that
- 7 you can fund it alternatively, what sort of substantiation can
- 8 you offer about, sort of, the ease with which the Department
- 9 could -- could locate what is not an insignificant number as
- 10 we -- as we mentioned earlier?
- 11 MR. PEARCE: I can't stand before the Court and say it
- 12 would be done in one day, two days, five days. I can say that
- 13 it is the full commitment of the Department of Justice to
- 14 ensure that the Special Counsel has the funding that it needs
- 15 to continue in -- in this prosecution.
- 16 THE COURT: Okay. So you're not pursuing a traditional
- 17 standing objection, it's more in the vein of the remedy to be
- 18 sought?
- MR. PEARCE: And the -- hence, that's why, in our
- 20 brief, we didn't start it. I mean, naturally, a standing
- 21 question would be one that what -- that would be addressed
- 22 first. It was -- after we addressed the substantive question,
- 23 it was to make the point that the defendants cannot
- 24 get -- or -- or should not be entitled to the relief that they
- 25 seek.

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             THE COURT: Okay. Now, so what about the -- there is
 2
     an argument in the supplemental brief about how the -- the
 3
     motion doesn't present a constitutional challenge to begin
     with. And I wanted to hear your view, in light of some of the
 4
     Supreme Court characterizations of these challenges, as
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 6
     instances in which the payment of money needs to be authorized
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     by a statute.
 8
             MR. PEARCE: So I -- I guess I don't see a whole lot
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     turning on the answer to this question one way or the other.
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     We still take the view that what they are challenging is the --
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     that application of this particular statute, and whether or
12
     not, principally, the Special Counsel is an independent
13
     counsel, also, the -- the "other law" piece. And, in our view,
14
     that is a question of statutory interpretation and, thus, a
15
     statutory issue.
16
             To the extent that -- that they would like --
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             THE COURT: But that's what I want to develop here. I
18
     mean, how is it not a constitutional challenge, when you have
19
     the Appropriations Clause requiring or indicating that no money
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     shall be drawn from the Treasury. But in consequence of
21
     appropriations made by law, you have Supreme Court cases saying
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     that in assessing this question, we have to determine whether
23
     payment of money was authorized by a statute, and that's the
     argument being raised. How is it not a constitutional
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challenge under the Appropriations Clause?

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- 1 MR. PEARCE: I don't want to fight this too much
- 2 because, as I said, I don't think it -- much actually turns on
- 3 it. I think our position would be, there are clearly moneys
- 4 appropriated to the Department of Justice that can be expended
- 5 on behalf of a special counsel. The fact that we draw from the
- 6 permanent indefinite appropriation, as opposed to, as I've
- 7 represented to the Court, some other place, is sort of an
- 8 allocation question, not necessarily --
- 9 THE COURT: But do you have any basis to believe that
- 10 it's not a constitutional challenge? On the one hand, you
- 11 could have a constitutional challenge, and then a
- 12 nonconstitutional one. And I want to just make sure that the
- 13 answer to that question is clear.
- I haven't heard anything in your presentation to
- 15 dissuade from the view that it is, in fact, a constitutional
- 16 challenge.
- 17 MR. PEARCE: Again, I -- I don't need to fight it. I
- 18 think that -- the fact that there -- that what we are trying to
- 19 figure out is statutes make it statutory. The Court isn't
- 20 persuaded. Again, it's not something -- it's not a hill on
- 21 which I feel inclined to die. So...
- 22 THE COURT: Well, I certainly don't want that to
- 23 happen, Mr. Pearce. You're doing a very fine job arguing. So,
- 24 all right.
- 25 Let's see. Any other matters to raise with the Court

- 1 on the funding challenge?
- 2 MR. PEARCE: So to -- to kind of get back to the
- 3 arguments that I think my friend on the other side sort of
- 4 really focused on is whether the Special Counsel is an
- 5 independent counsel. In our view, that -- the answer to that
- 6 is yes. It flows from the regulations, GAO opinions, the two
- 7 courts that have looked at it. I know the Court -- I mentioned
- 8 also Congressional acquiescence, but I do think it is relevant
- 9 that all eight of the Special Counsels -- one independent
- 10 regulatory counsel, all seven of the special counsels that have
- 11 existed have been funded under the permanent indefinite
- 12 appropriation. I will say I --
- 13 THE COURT: All of those -- all of those funding
- 14 approvals, they all sort of trace back to the same -- same
- 15 statutory basis that you're bringing forward now; correct? The
- 16 515 and the 533?
- MR. PEARCE: Yes, that's -- that is my understanding.
- 18 Yes.
- 19 THE COURT: Okay.
- MR. PEARCE: And I -- and I'm -- I will stipulate I
- 21 agree that under the Ethics in Government Act, that independent
- 22 counsel had greater independence than the Special Counsel does
- 23 under the Special Counsel regulations. But, again, consistent
- 24 with the things I have just mentioned, GAO, the -- sorry -- the
- 25 regulations themselves, GAO, and the two courts that have

- 1 looked at this, it's -- it's our view that there is sufficient
- 2 independence. There's no day-to-day supervision. There is the
- 3 fact that under 600.6, the Special Counsel has the full
- 4 independent authority -- I think my friend on the other side
- 5 quoted it, but omitted the word "independent." And the very
- 6 purpose, of course, of the regulations was to strike that
- 7 balance between independence, but not so much independence that
- 8 became problematic under the EGA, some degree of accountability
- 9 as well.
- 10 THE COURT: So you acknowledge there is some -- some
- 11 reduction in the independence, compared to the independent
- 12 counsel's statute framework. But in your view, there's still
- 13 sufficient independence under the regulatory framework.
- 14 Is that a fair characterization?
- 15 MR. PEARCE: That is a fair characterization. I
- 16 believe that characterization also applies to the GAO's views
- 17 as of 2004 and going forward. GAO, of course, a part of
- 18 Congress. As well as the views of the judges overseeing the
- 19 Stone and the Hunter Biden matters.
- THE COURT: So if you were to address more
- 21 particularly, though, let's say, taking the -- the removal
- 22 mechanism, how would you -- how would you say the independence
- 23 is comparable?
- MR. PEARCE: Yeah. I mean, that's -- I think that's an
- 25 interesting question. Because on the one hand, there was for

- 1 cause removal under the Ethics in Government Act, and there was
- 2 for cause removal under the regulations as well. And I think
- 3 those two are -- there's no difference between the two.
- But, of course, as we did mention when we discussed
- 5 this on Friday, unlike under the old EGA regime, there is the
- 6 possibility for the Attorney General to rescind the
- 7 regulations, to modify or rescind the order. I don't think
- 8 that that means that there is, therefore, less -- or that there
- 9 is no independence. It just makes sure that the Attorney
- 10 General is, in fact, the principal officer supervising and
- 11 overseeing the Special Counsel.
- 12 THE COURT: Are you aware of any regulation in the
- 13 space ever being rescinded?
- 14 MR. PEARCE: Any regulation, sorry, in the --
- 15 THE COURT: In this space, in this special prosecutor
- 16 arena.
- MR. PEARCE: I believe that the various, kind of,
- 18 one-off regulations have been rescinded or certainly repealed
- 19 as new ones have come into place.
- 20 THE COURT: But no recision of the regulation in this
- 21 midstream appointment; correct?
- MR. PEARCE: I am -- I am not aware of that, no.
- 23 THE COURT: Okay. So -- because there's a lot of
- 24 reliance on history and historical practices, and then there's
- 25 this -- this suggestion that, because the regulation can be

- 1 repealed at any time, there's -- there's a degree of control
- 2 there.
- But in reality, has a regulation like this or an
- 4 appointment order ever actually been rescinded?
- 5 MR. PEARCE: So as I said, I'm not familiar with any
- 6 rescission of a regulation. There certainly have been special
- 7 prosecutors who have been fired, not only the sort of famous
- 8 Saturday night massacre, but going back historically --
- 9 THE COURT: But in the end, in that scenario, there was
- 10 a prosecutor that was ultimately reinstalled who completed his
- 11 work or her work; correct?
- MR. PEARCE: That's correct, yes.
- 13 THE COURT: So, then, this notion of rescission is a
- 14 potential vacatur, so to speak, of appointment orders. Is it
- 15 really, sort of, an illusory possibility?
- MR. PEARCE: I think that's not in the least correct,
- 17 and I think that --
- THE COURT: Why not?
- 19 MR. PEARCE: So I think I addressed this when we talked
- 20 about it on Friday. I think the way that courts, and most
- 21 importantly the Supreme Court, have discussed this is not
- 22 looking at, you know, was there the exercise of the potential
- 23 powers of the principal officer or supervisor or director? It
- 24 was: Did that principal officer or supervisor or director have
- 25 the ability to do it?

- I think I quoted or cited the penultimate paragraph
- 2 from the Arthrex decision, where the Chief Justice, I think,
- 3 said something like where the director had the discretion to
- 4 overrule the administrative patent judges. It's not a
- 5 question, thus, of what happens, you know, in reality every
- 6 day. It is: What are the, sort of -- under the statutory or
- 7 regulatory or relevant legal framework, what are the -- how is
- 8 power and -- sort of, structured?
- 9 THE COURT: I recall in Attorney General Reno's
- 10 statement in 1999, going through some of the pitfalls with the
- 11 former statute, one concern was that, realistically, the
- 12 political pressure was just too enormous to -- to ever -- ever
- 13 yank, so to speak, a special prosecutor.
- 14 But it seems, that in terms of historical practice,
- that there hasn't really been any change because there's no
- 16 example of any special prosecutor ever being removed from
- 17 office.
- MR. PEARCE: Well, again, there is some that predates
- 19 the Reno Regulations. But I think the answer to that is, under
- 20 the Armstrong case, the, sort of, presumption of regularity,
- 21 the notion, as I represented in court, that special counsels --
- 22 I'm not going to speak for those, but I will speak for ours --
- 23 have complied with -- whether it was a regulatory -- whatever
- 24 the specific framework was, typically regulatory, to ensure
- 25 that they are following Justice Department policy, that they

- 1 are complying with any, kind of, consultation or other
- 2 requirements.
- I think that's the best account as to why there hasn't
- 4 been a termination of a special prosecutor. Again, I will
- 5 speak only on behalf of ours, but I think that's probably the
- 6 best way to understand that history.
- 7 THE COURT: So I think you have used the term
- 8 "regulatory Special Counsel," and I have heard that term in
- 9 some of the materials. Is that -- what does that mean, a
- 10 regulatory Special Counsel?
- MR. PEARCE: So I think it's actually a little bit of a
- 12 misnomer. I think what it -- what it specifically was applied
- 13 to, as I -- as I understand, it was really Robert Fiske,
- 14 because he was the one special prosecutor, special counsel, who
- 15 was appointed at a time when the Ethics in Government Act had
- 16 lapsed and before it was reauthorized, that period from the end
- of 1992 through -- I think it was June 30th of 1994.
- 18 And so he was appointed there -- I say a misnomer
- 19 because, as our conversations have -- today and Friday have
- 20 indicated, I think there has to be a statute backing that up.
- 21 So I think it has to have been under 515(b) or 533. But then I
- 22 understand the term "regulatory Special Counsel" -- or I think
- 23 it was "regulatory independent counsel," to differentiate
- 24 between a counsel who had been appointed under the statute,
- 25 that is the Ethics in Government Act, from someone who had been

- 1 appointed under the Attorney General's independent statutory
- 2 authority, and then operating under regulations of the Justice
- 3 Department as opposed to the EGA.
- 4 THE COURT: So are you saying the term "regulatory
- 5 Special Counsel," for example, in the GAO reports would concern
- 6 only those folks who had particular regulations passed during
- 7 those periods of time when the statute was constitutionally in
- 8 question?
- 9 MR. PEARCE: I -- I read the GAO reports to refer to
- 10 regulatory independent counsel as sort of synonymous with
- 11 Special Counsel in the modern era; meaning we distinguish it
- 12 from those people who were made independent counsel, capital I,
- 13 capital C, under the statute from those who have been come into
- 14 power because of the independent statutory appointment by the
- 15 Attorney General, and then that Special Counsel's operation
- 16 under the operative regulations.
- 17 THE COURT: Well, it's just interesting. I mean, why
- 18 would you call them a regulatory Special Counsel? It just kind
- of begs the question: Well, where is the statutory authority
- if we're describing them as such?
- 21 MR. PEARCE: So I think it's -- I think it's actually
- 22 independent -- and probably was my mistake to say it -- I think
- 23 it's independent regulatory counsel, not independent Special
- 24 Counsel. And that's -- I think the question you just asked is
- 25 why I think it's a misnomer; right? Because I think it is

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1 making -- it is drawing a quick and easy --
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- THE COURT: But maybe it's telling.
- 3 MR. PEARCE: Well, I mean, first of all, it applies
- 4 just to Robert Fiske. But I think it's a --
- 5 THE COURT: Why does it apply only to him?
- 6 MR. PEARCE: Well, you know, it actually could apply to
- 7 the three also from former Attorney General Bill Barr that we
- 8 identified in our supplemental briefing -- our supplemental
- 9 notice last night.
- 10 For the reason I think I just gave, but to make sure
- 11 I'm clear, Robert Fiske was not appointed under the EGA
- 12 statute. It didn't exist at the time. It had lapsed. It
- 13 hadn't been expired. I think you would also say that with
- 14 respect to Frederick Lacey, Malcolm Wilke, and Nicholas Bua.
- 15 Although the IC statute, the EGA, was in existence, the
- 16 Attorney General there decided to use his own statutory
- 17 authority and make them -- and sort of have -- have supervision
- 18 over them through the regulations. So there was -- they were
- 19 independent regulatory counsel.
- 20 THE COURT: What's your best resource for this, kind
- 21 of, historical survey of special prosecutors, sometimes
- 22 referred to as independent counsels and, you know -- or
- 23 regulatory special counsels? Where is there the most
- 24 comprehensive historical survey of each of these individuals?
- 25 MR. PEARCE: I'm glad you asked. You asked that a

- 1 couple of times. You didn't ask me, and I wanted to give you
- 2 my recommendations.
- I think there is a book by Terry Eastland, I think
- 4 called "Ethics" -- I can't remember the next part -- "and the
- 5 Independent Counsel." It was written in 1989, so it's somewhat
- 6 dated. But I think it has a very -- I'm not sure I'd call it
- 7 comprehensive, but certainly a more developed historical
- 8 discussion than a lot of the other sources.
- 9 THE COURT: It's cited, I think, by Justice Kavanaugh.
- 10 MR. PEARCE: Exactly. That was going to be my next --
- 11 THE COURT: Okay.
- MR. PEARCE: Justice Kavanaugh cites it in that
- independent counsel and the presidency article, which I think
- 14 also has some helpful history. But a lot of it is derivative
- on the Eastland book.
- 16 THE COURT: Point. Okay. All right.
- Now, what do you say to the suggestion that there is
- 18 this inherent tension, in your argument, between sort of
- 19 distancing from -- from pure independence and the discussion as
- 20 between principal and inferior versus in this appropriations
- 21 context, where greater independence is more consistent with the
- 22 appropriation?
- MR. PEARCE: I think that is true of both sides in this
- 24 matter, and I think that's something -- you just mentioned the
- 25 Justice Kavanaugh article. It's something that he points up in

- 1 his piece on independent counsel and the presidency. It is
- 2 inherent in the effort to, on the one hand, ensure that --
- 3 whether we call it a independent counsel or a Special
- 4 Counsel -- has adequate independence when a situation presents
- 5 itself that requires the avoidance of conflict or somebody who
- 6 can operate outside of the typical Justice Department, sort of,
- 7 operations because it's investigating the Justice Department
- 8 itself or it's investigating some sort of high-ranking or
- 9 high-level political official.
- And so wanting to balance that need for independence,
- 11 while, at the same time, not shifting so far over into a kind
- 12 of independent or Special Counsel that has sort of the kind of
- 13 free reign and sort of overly investigating that became the
- 14 concern that, I think, led to the lapse in the expiration of
- 15 the Independent Counsel Act.
- 16 Striking the balance between accountability and
- independence, as Attorney General Reno said, in promulgating
- 18 the 1999 regulations.
- 19 THE COURT: Okay. Just a quick case law follow-up
- 20 from -- from Friday. Are you familiar or aware of any circuit
- 21 case law addressing whether a U.S. attorney is a superior or
- 22 inferior officer? I know there was a reference to Hilario, and
- 23 I think there's another case called Gantt, but I want to make
- 24 sure I have a full understanding of the current circuit law on
- 25 that question.

- 1 MR. PEARCE: Sure. And if I can mention one Supreme
- 2 Court case as well, which is the 1926 -- the Myers, M-Y-E-R-S,
- 3 case.
- 4 THE COURT: But did that address U.S. attorneys being
- 5 inferior?
- 6 MR. PEARCE: It -- so this is dicta. We don't have to
- 7 fight about whether dicta or not. But in dicta, the Court
- 8 there says some version of a district attorney, which at the
- 9 time was the modern U.S. attorney, is something like a --
- 10 clearly an inferior officer. So I think that's relevant to the
- 11 Court's question.
- Beyond that, the cases that the Court just cited,
- 13 Hilario from the 1st circuit, Gantt from the 9th Circuit, I
- 14 believe, is --
- 15 THE COURT: One of those concerns an interim U.S.
- 16 attorney.
- MR. PEARCE: Actually, honestly, I think both of them
- 18 discuss interims, in part. But I understand part of the
- 19 Court's rationale in both of those to decide that a U.S.
- 20 attorney is an inferior officer --
- 21 THE COURT: If they're exercising direction and
- 22 supervision, tracking Edmond.
- MR. PEARCE: I think that's right. I'm pausing only --
- 24 yeah. So I think both were decided after -- after Edmond was.
- 25 But, yes, I mean, it is certainly, those courts' decisions

- 1 since 1978, the position of the United States as well, that
- 2 United States attorneys are inferior officers.
- 3 THE COURT: So am I correct that there would be only
- 4 one superior officer in the Department of Justice, and that's
- 5 the Attorney General?
- 6 MR. PEARCE: So the -- I -- I think that is the logical
- 7 conclusion that -- that flows from our argument. I am not
- 8 aware of the -- of the Department having taken a -- a position.
- 9 We have taken the position that United States attorneys are
- 10 inferior officers. We haven't had to take the position with --
- 11 I think the amicus for constitutional lawyers made a
- 12 representation to the Court that the Solicitor General is a
- 13 principal officer, and that the deputy attorney general is a
- 14 principal officer. That -- that is not a position on which the
- 15 United States has -- that is not a position the United States
- 16 has taken. And I -- and the consistent view from what -- what
- 17 I have told the Court is that the principal officer -- the
- 18 Attorney General would be the sole principal officer.
- But I don't think the Court has to reach -- go that far
- 20 to -- to -- certainly, to resolve this motion and to deny it.
- 21 THE COURT: Is there anything question-producing about
- that proposition that there would be only one principal officer
- 23 in the entire Department of Justice?
- MR. PEARCE: I don't think that there would be anything
- 25 question-producing. I mean, for example, if you take the

- 1 handful of times that the Constitution has used the term
- 2 "principal officer," there is one in the opinions clause that
- 3 certainly suggests the president can get one opinion from a
- 4 principal officer; that's used twice in the 25th Amendment that
- 5 has to do with the incapacity of a president. And it
- 6 identifies a meeting of -- I don't have the precise language
- 7 here -- but the principal officers of all the executive
- 8 branches, which, certainly, Congress has understood as meaning
- 9 the cabinet, i.e., the top person in these executive branches.
- 10 So --
- 11 THE COURT: And what to make of the various
- 12 statute -- statutes that require, for example, U.S. attorneys
- 13 and the Solicitor General to go through the presidential
- 14 nomination and Senate confirmation process? What to make of
- 15 that statutory Congressional judgment for such high-level
- 16 individuals?
- 17 MR. PEARCE: So I think that that is Congress playing
- an oversight role that it is fully statutorily entitled to do.
- 19 Certainly, Alexander Hamilton talks about that in the
- 20 76 Federalist Papers, saying that that kind of default -- and
- 21 that's my second point -- that kind of default process produces
- 22 better officers. Congress could certainly be of -- be of the
- 23 view that it produces better-quality officers when you have got
- 24 somebody who is not only nominated by the president, but
- 25 ultimately confirmed by the Senate. But that doesn't transform

- 1 it into a constitutional requirement; that is statutory.
- I mean, there are plenty of individuals, as I think the
- 3 Court just said, for whom Congress provides for presidential
- 4 nomination/Senate confirmation, where the government has long
- 5 taken the position they're not U.S. attorneys is the best
- 6 example.
- 7 THE COURT: Assuming U.S. attorneys are not principal
- 8 officers --
- 9 MR. PEARCE: Certainly --
- 10 THE COURT: -- of course.
- MR. PEARCE: -- which has, again, been our -- the
- 12 government's position since 1978.
- 13 THE COURT: Okay. There has been some discussion about
- 14 deference to Congressional judgments and certainly wouldn't be
- 15 a dispositive signal about the status of an officer
- 16 constitutionally. But what do you have to say about that, that
- 17 at some point, when you see Congress repeatedly subjecting
- 18 certain positions to that degree of process, that we would then
- 19 reach the inference that someone tantamount to that position
- 20 would also, necessarily, have to go through that same
- 21 procedure?
- MR. PEARCE: So again, two responses. One is -- I
- 23 think the Court, a few minutes ago, raised the question about
- 24 how much weight and analysis, whatnot, to give Congressional
- 25 deference or -- or acquiescence. I think --

- 1 THE COURT: Well, I don't know if I would collapse the
- 2 two in that sense. Acquiescence is, essentially, inaction; and
- 3 what to make of that. And I'm saying, Congressional judgments
- 4 requiring, for example, U.S. attorneys to go through that
- 5 formal process, same with SGs.
- 6 MR. PEARCE: So two responses separate from the one
- 7 I -- I just made. One is, that is -- the idea of presidential
- 8 appointment or presidential nomination/Senate confirmation is
- 9 the default under the Constitution. But that isn't the test
- 10 for what makes somebody a principal officer. And so the fact
- 11 that Congress has done that, again, leads to better-quality
- 12 officers. But even just at a more practical level, I mean,
- it's certainly my understanding that there are certain -- so,
- officers in the military, where, the way the process works is
- 15 that there are lists of names that are just given, and then,
- 16 you know, the president says, okay, I nominate all these
- 17 people. Congress just says, check. And so it is a -- very
- 18 much a pro forma process, which --
- 19 THE COURT: But there is still a Congressional role,
- 20 however -- however quick. There is still Congress taking
- 21 advantage of its constitutional responsibility and entitlement
- in the Appointments Clause; would you agree?
- MR. PEARCE: I would certainly agree. And I think
- 24 Congress can -- probably, with some constitutional limits,
- 25 could probably do that. I don't think Congress could say, for

- 1 example, a president, him or herself, has to be
- 2 presidentially -- it wouldn't make any sense. But certainly,
- 3 Congress has its authority to do that.
- 4 But I just go back to the point that I made before,
- 5 that doesn't define -- or the scope of the constitutional
- 6 question.
- 7 THE COURT: Okay. All right. That's all I have.
- 8 Thank you, Mr. Pearce.
- 9 MR. PEARCE: Thank you very much.
- 10 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Bove.
- 11 MR. BOVE: Thank you, Judge.
- 12 There are just a few points that I would like to touch
- on in response. The first -- I would like to start with the
- 14 text of the appropriation and the -- the language that precedes
- 15 it, and in particular, the significance of these two references
- 16 to the -- to the Ethics in Government Act, and the -- the
- 17 citations to 28 U.S.C.
- And this is -- I'm not sure if it was an argument that
- 19 was presented to Judge Jackson in the District of Columbia, but
- 20 it's not one that made -- was analyzed in any meaningful way.
- 21 And I do think it's important, as the Court grapples with what
- 22 do these terms in the relevant appropriation mean?
- 23 But the language that precedes it -- and this is clear
- 24 from the conference report at 485 and 486 -- referred to money
- 25 that had already been spent, and referred to the idea that

- 1 there was going to be a reimbursement for money that had been
- 2 spent pursuant to these continuing resolutions,
- 3 while the -- while the DOJ was waiting for the EGA to be -- to
- 4 be renewed.
- 5 And so the significance of that is, that is why, in the
- 6 appropriation and that first paragraph, that's not the
- 7 operative paragraph, Congress referred to the EGA only and not
- 8 to other law. And I don't think that that -- that distinction,
- 9 the need to refund money that had already been spent, supports
- 10 the argument that there is -- this more restrictive view should
- 11 be provided to the -- the operative appropriation language. It
- 12 really just gets us back to what -- our main point, which is
- 13 that "other law" can't mean what the government is saying that
- 14 it means.
- 15 The -- the second point that I wanted to make, Judge,
- 16 is that Your Honor asked a question about -- have there been
- 17 situations where one of the sets of regulations has been
- 18 rescinded? As a practical matter, is this a real check?
- And I agree that the answer is no; and that as a
- 20 practical matter, the answer is no. And I just wanted to sort
- 21 of re-highlight and draw the Court's attention that the one
- thing that we have seen DOJ do with respect to these
- 23 regulations is that when the GAO was looking at Mr. Fitzgerald,
- 24 James Comey went back to the implementing order for Fitzgerald,
- 25 and -- and struck the application of the Reno Regulations in

- 1 order to convince, I submit, the GAO that Mr. Fitzgerald was
- 2 sufficiently independent to be able to access the
- 3 appropriation.
- 4 So the one example that's in the record of a time when
- 5 somebody acting with the authority of the Attorney General
- 6 modified one of these implementing orders, it supports our
- 7 position, not -- not harms it.
- 8 On the issue of remedy, I -- I think that Your Honor
- 9 hit this on the head, and I just wanted to -- to point back to
- 10 our citation to Judge Jones' concurrence in All American Check
- 11 Cashing in the Fifth Circuit, where I think, in a very
- 12 persuasive way, she walks through all of the different types of
- 13 ways that you can see in the Supreme Court's cases that
- 14 separate -- the specifics of a separation of powers problem can
- 15 bear on what the appropriate remedy is.
- 16 And we can see it in our supplemental briefing about
- 17 CFPB that there is some language about separation of powers
- 18 rejecting an argument that the associations in that case were
- 19 making. But what they were making was, I submit, a -- a
- 20 different type of argument. They're saying, generally
- 21 speaking, there is a problem with this appropriation --
- 22 it -- and there is a general separation of powers issue, not
- 23 necessarily linked to the enforcement actions that we are
- 24 facing, but categorically.
- 25 We are -- I submit, have a different situation here

- 1 with a very specific Special Counsel, taking a very specific
- 2 set of actions. And we laid out a position on behalf of a
- 3 defendant, who is very much aggrieved in these proceedings with
- 4 a liberty interest that is imminently threatened in all kinds
- of ways, where that type of -- the type of relief we are
- 6 seeking, dismissal, is appropriate based on what Judge Jones
- 7 said and the -- and the authorities she laid out, and that the
- 8 Supreme Court, as Your Honor noted, didn't really have -- have
- 9 occasion to address in CFPB.
- 10 Another point on this topic of remedy. I provided to
- 11 Your Honor a citation to an Eastern District of California
- 12 case, where, following McIntosh, the defendants in McIntosh
- 13 went back to the district court. And the government -- the
- 14 Department of Justice -- voluntarily dismissed the charges
- 15 because, based on the reasoning of McIntosh, there wasn't
- 16 funding for the prosecution. And the language of the -- the
- 17 Rule 48 filing that's on the docket there, in substance, says:
- 18 We can't meet our evidentiary burden of establishing that we
- 19 should be able to access the appropriated funds for purposes of
- 20 this prosecution.
- 21 I already said all that. But my point is, Judge, we're
- 22 at this two-day hearing talking about whether and to what
- 23 extent Special Counsel's Office is acting in a way that is
- 24 consistent with and bound by DOJ practices? Did they talk to
- 25 them? Did they find -- did they find out why in the Eastern

1 District of California based on the reasoning in McIntosh, the 2 government -- the prosecutors, you know, in place under the 3 supervision of a U.S. attorney, decided to dismiss a case, understanding fully, I submit, that if they hadn't chosen that 4 5 course, the Court would have done that for them? And instead, 6 based on that record in -- and literally, no representations to 7 Your Honor about the degree of oversight and whether things are 8 consistent with practices, just come in here and say dismissal 9 is not appropriate. I mean, this has happened, and it should 10 happen here. 11 This issue of the alternative sources of funding, I 12 just -- it's -- it's difficult for me to imagine how that is a basis to resolve this motion, and I think what it really does 13 14 is highlight the separation of powers issues that we're talking 15 about. Because the Special Counsel's Office should not be able 16 to say, hypothetically, there are other appropriations that we may be able to access; so, Your Honor, you shouldn't look 17 18 carefully at whether this permanent indefinite appropriation 19 with no cap, as Your Honor has observed, should apply here. 20 Because I submit, that if -- if Your Honor made a 21 ruling that -- that for the -- either or both of the two 22 reasons we've identified, that appropriation should not be 23 accessible to this Special Counsel -- and I think we have given

the Court all kinds of reasons that that is true. And I think

the Special Counsel's Office has provided legal argument but no

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25

- 1 factual basis in the record to -- to really contest us -- I
- 2 think there would be a very strong political response to
- 3 actions by the Department of Justice, to say, actually, no,
- 4 we're going to take a mulligan on the permanent indefinite
- 5 appropriation, and we're going to take a look at another.
- I think Congress would have a response. And certainly,
- 7 we might have another motion. Not just President Trump. We
- 8 have co-defendants here. And so we would react to that
- 9 differently as well. So that hypothetical, I think, only
- 10 highlights that this is a process governed by the
- 11 Appropriations Clause that requires -- that should require --
- 12 that contemplates real interaction between Congress looking at
- 13 these things and prosecutors carrying out their duties. And --
- 14 and what we have going on here is not that.
- 15 And, lastly, Your Honor's touched, with both sides,
- 16 on there is some inherent tension in this idea of what
- independence means on Friday and what it means today. Well,
- 18 here is what I think it really means to us. Our position is
- 19 that more oversight from Congress is required for the
- 20 extraordinary things that are going on in these -- these
- 21 prosecutions. Extraordinary and unprecedented. And whether
- 22 that is more oversight on the front end, as contemplated for
- 23 principal officers, or at this point, based on a real
- 24 appropriations process, where current Congressmen are looking
- 25 at what is actually going on. That's our position. More is

- 1 required here, given what is at -- at stake.
- The government's position, in contrast, is that much,
- 3 much less is required, that not much at all is required. And
- 4 that is, I think, disrespectful and an unacceptable way to the
- 5 separation of powers issues that we're talking about.
- 6 And I -- you know, one -- one way to really highlight
- 7 this, Judge, is we're going to come back this afternoon to talk
- 8 about -- just speaking for President Trump -- what is a truly
- 9 extraordinary effort -- extraordinary -- to gag his ability to
- 10 speak, including at -- at a debate, on the campaign trail?
- 11 Who -- who authorized that, Judge? Who authorized --
- 12 did the Attorney General authorize that motion o be filed? Is
- 13 that what you were told on Friday in vague terms but without
- 14 specifics? And I think it really brings to the head -- to a
- 15 head exactly what we're dealing with here and why at each and
- 16 every juncture in this case, we will push for that oversight
- 17 and try and illustrate ways that it is really falling apart.
- 18 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. That will conclude
- 19 our arguments this morning on the motion to dismiss. We will
- 20 resume at 3:00 p.m. to address the other bond modification
- 21 motion.
- I wish you all a pleasant lunch, and we will see each
- 23 other at 3:00. Thank you.
- 24 (These proceedings concluded at 11:42 a.m.)

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4	I hereby certify that th	ne foregoing is an accurate
5	transcription of the pro	oceedings in the above-entitled matter.
6		
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